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The McGill Daily

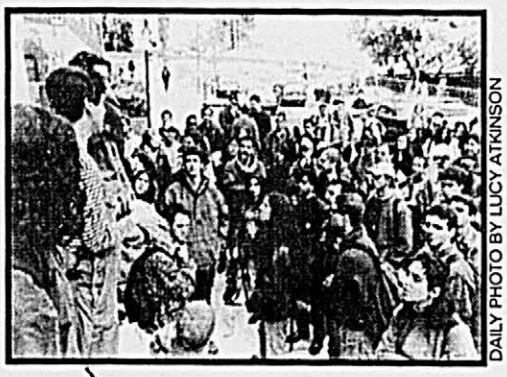
Demos-Я-us since 1911

RED CROSS DEBATE CONTINUES

Students call for Carter's resignation

by Idella Sturino

About 150 students gathered outside the Shatner building last Thursday to protest the Students' Society of McGill University's (SSMU) President Chris Carter's decision to send a press release to the Montréal *Gazette* and other media criticising the Canadian Red Cross (CRC.)



DAILY PHOTO BY LUCY ATKINSON

Carter's press release was issued in response to concerns raised by many McGill students about the CRC's questionnaire, administered to all potential blood donors, which they say is discriminatory.

Demonstrators said that Carter overstepped his bounds as SSMU president and misrepresented McGill students by sending the press release without Council's approval.

Aisha Aubil, a student who helped organise the demonstration, said the issue for her was that "Chris Carter misrepresented me as a student when he sent the press release," because he signed it as SSMU President. She added that the press release was threatening to the CRC, a sentiment that was repeated by others at the demonstration.

The press release, which was sent to the *Gazette* last week on SSMU letterhead, explained a recent SSMU policy decision permitting Carter to "continually petition" the CRC to revise its questionnaire, which is currently worded so as to screen out gay and bisexual men.

Aside from being discriminatory, critics say the questionnaire is homophobic and based on faulty logic as gay men are no longer considered a high risk group. In recent years, students and clubs such as LBGTM have been trying to raise awareness about the questionnaire in the hopes of affecting change.

The press release to the *Gazette* stated that this year, a group of individuals, including Carter, planned to attempt to give blood in order to raise attention to the discriminatory nature of the questionnaire. When the CRC caught wind of this plan from the *Gazette*, it announced it was pulling out of the SSMU-organised blood drive.

People at Thursday's rally said it was the latter part of Carter's press release, expressing his intention to try to give blood, which was "threatening" to the CRC and caused them to cancel.

At the demonstration, which lasted about an hour, Aubil and others circulated a petition for the removal of Carter as SSMU president, stating that he violated constitutional duties and responsibilities, such as "ensuring that the Red Cross will not be associating or conducting Blood Drives with the SSMU" in the future.

In a later interview, Carter maintained that his intention was not to make the Red Cross leave campus: "If anyone is upset that they're gone they have no one to blame but the Red Cross."

He also said that by sending the press release to the *Gazette* he was in fact acting within SSMU's recent policy decision to allow him to "petition" the CRC: "Look up a definition of petitioning, it was petitioning," he said.

LBGTM administrator Hannah Rogers agrees. "The issue at hand is what the word petition means, and I believe that students elected an activist president, so they should understand that his interpretation of the word is valid," she said.

Rogers added that Carter campaigned on a platform that emphasised the rights for women, queers and francophones and that when an issue of discrimination arises he should act on it, "because it affects all students."

Many students at the demonstration, however, seemed more than willing to sign the petition against Carter, with some even offering to circulate one in their classes.

Frederique Boura was among those who signed the petition against Carter because, she said, "he has too many personal agendas, and the students weren't asked what they wanted. The press release shouldn't have gone out."

Jarrod Daniel also signed the petition. For him, the bottom line is that "people need blood, and the Red Cross is never coming back to McGill."

Daniel's sentiments about the need for blood were echoed by many at the demonstration who said that by sparking the Red Cross to leave, Carter had "cost lives".

Carter added that criticism has centred around the cancellation of the blood drive but that no one at Thursday's demonstration turned that anger toward the Red Cross' discriminatory and irresponsible practices.

"Saving lives involves accurate screening, safe screening and accurate information," he said referring to the organisation's questionnaire which may give people the impression that only queer men are really at risk for contracting HIV/AIDS. In fact, heterosexual women are the fastest

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TURNING UP THE HEAT

'New McGill' won't be imposed, say McGill employees

by Anup Grewal

Gathering in front of the McGill Faculty Club on McTavish street, members of McGill's three largest labour unions — representing more than 2,000 workers — sent a strong message to the McGill administration that they are worth more than what the University is giving them.

While McGill's Board of Governors and Senate held a joint meeting inside, representatives of McGill's non-academic support staff, service staff and teaching assistants amassed outside, protesting serious cutbacks being made to their sectors, as well as the University's slow-moving collective bargaining negotiations.

"We won't stand for arbitrary cuts," declared Paul Béland, a representative from local 800 of the Service Employees Union.

The reductions being made to the number of staff are one of the unions' biggest concerns. In the latest cut, the University plans to reduce the support staff to 120 workers. The unions claim this is not enough staff for McGill's 100 buildings.

Said Gita, an employee at the Stewart Biology building, "When I came here eight years ago, there were 400 workers, now there are only 138 and soon there will only be 120."

"This is impossible," she continued. "Students need a good environment to study and if they keep cutting, students will have to work in dirty places."

As well, the printing services of McGill have seen their service go unused as the University begins to contract out

DAILY PHOTO BY MIKE CULLEN

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Hyde Park

One week ago writers were justifiably criticising the administration for pitting "students against students" yet again - only this time, the "barbarian" crusades are being watched by the administration, media and Montreal community, while the Canadian Red Cross (CRC) sneaks out the back door.

For me, the crumbling of student solidarity began on Wednesday morning as I read Mark Feldman's quotations on page two of that day's *Tribune* . The SSMU VP Internal denounced students interested in dissemination information about discrimination and unsafe blood as "people ... using the blood drive for political purposes". Mr. Feldman has clearly forgotten that it was he himself who graciously invited individuals to set up a table inside the ballroom before he was even asked. Further, Mr. Feldman argued that the Red Cross is not discriminatory simply because it gives blood to anybody in need, despite the fact that he, along with the rest of SSMU Council, voted to petition the CRC to change it's questionnaire due to it's discriminatory nature on September 26th.

Just over twenty-four hours later, conflict began anew as the steps of Shatner turned into a battleground for a demonstration ripe with false accusations and mud-slinging arguments. Students were engaged in head-on confrontation amidst far-fetched calls for impeachment. The CRC's decision to cancel the blood drive had galvanized a reactionary campaign based on knowingly misleading and manipulative information.

Misdirected anger and victim blame are among the most damaging forces humans can invoke. Frustration over the blood drive cancellation is justified, but let's not forget the original issue - that the Red Cross' policies are indisputably unsafe and discriminatory. SSMU President Chris Carter wanted to try to give blood, and his press release was written to publicize the flaws in the CRC questionnaire. Then what happened? The Red Cross decided it didn't want to play. Had the Red Cross truly believed in its policy, it would have stayed, and none of us would be lunging at throats.

Perhaps we're inheriting a legacy from the past - after all, the blood drive question on the 1993-94 SSMU referendum unfairly pit proponents of blood drives against students fighting homophobia and unsafe blood. But that same referendum question, flawed as it was, revealed an important statistic: 80% of McGill students were in favor of blood drives. Today that number should be even higher because the poor phrasing of the referendum question and polarized context of opinions in which it arose skewed its results. *Nobody opposes blood drives, and nobody wanted the CRC to leave early.*

Like Mr. Feldman, I too believe that "the people who lose out are the people who need blood" - but it's because of the CRC's failure to ask the right questions. So let's address the real issues here and find alternative ways to give blood at local Montreal donor stations and hospitals. Let's hold a public forum to discuss the questionnaire with the Red Cross. Let's hope for future blood drives while supporting LBGTM information and lobbying campaigns. But above all, let us rise above the fray together and end this brutal trend in petty student bickering before CRC ignorance regresses any further into prehistory.

Darrell Tan, Political Coordinator, LBGTM

In talking with people around campus over the Red Cross' hasty departure, many comments revolved around general relief that SSMU had both listened to its constituents as well as done something for them. Some of the issues being raised are as follows:

From the issue of health, it is a known fact that the largest amount of HIV-positive cases fall within the heterosexual malepopulation pool. The Red Cross questionnaire, by not posing sufficient questions toward sexual practices of all donors sets the blood receiver more at risk. In posing questions purely toward the donor's past sexual history not only would a far safer method result but it would actually fill the demand for more available blood, the risk of HIV infection being eliminated with the Red Cross' mandatory screening.

From the issue of ecthics, while the comment that "people are using the blood drive for political purposes" might be true, one must ask what initiated such a response from students. The Red Cross has had a long record of being thrown off university campuses due to such a questionnaire. Not only have universities not amended their decision because it involved "politics" but the Red Cross themselves have not changed their questionnaire despite the ethical and health hazards that are a result. When the Red Cross creates such a questionnaire that is so obviously prejudicial and defend it on erroneous assumptions of health, they themselves creat the "political" issue. With the Red Cross' refusal to change such policy, despite countless universityies refusing them access to their campus, the transform the issue from one of politics to one of ethics. I continue to applaud those in SSMU that have both questioned the tactics of the Red Cross as well as listened and acted upon student demands relative to attacking each other.

Simone Levine

PUTTING YOUTH ON THE BACKBURNER

Federal youth programmes may lose $65 million

By Samer Muscati

OTTAWA (CUP) — Federal officials are denying reports that they may lose $65 million earmarked for youth programs.

Human Resource Minister Douglas Young must use the money by next April or lose it, says a Canadian Press(CP) article based on a leaked internal briefing note.

The money includes $20 million that was allocated for students to help manage their student loans. Stephan Tremblay, a Bloc Quebecois MP, told the House of Commons he is surprised the Ministry has no strategy for the money. "How can the minister justify his government's inaction?" asked Tremblay during question period on September 24. "Does the government lack imagination or is it hoarding money so it can spend it during the months preceding an election to charm young voters?"

Young would only respond that he has "no doubt that all money set aside for creating jobs for young people will be spent in due course.

"The briefing note suggests that $9 million be spent on current programs such as the youth internship program, $15 million on an international program for internships in Canadian companies abroad, and $6 million on a program that allows companies to hire university students to bring them up to speed on the Internet, says the CP article.

Francoise Girard, federal director of youth programs, says that the $65 million figure is inaccurate but would not release the details of the briefing note.

However, Human Resources has a history of not spending money allocated to youth programs. Despite promising to spend $100 million annually on Youth Service Canada projects to help 10,000 disadvantaged youth find jobs, only $52 million of the allocated $200 million was spent over the first two years.

Girard says that the government will be releasing it's youth strategy in the fall.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

much of its printing work.

"This is dreadfully bad management," said Béland. "They are sending work outside, at God knows what cost."

Considering these cutbacks, the administration's recent decision to grant a $2 million merit fund to increase the salaries of academic faculty has left the workers incensed.

"It is unacceptable that the McGill administration has amongst the highest salaries of public servants in Québec, and is giving faculty a $2 million pay increase, all the while complaining about the University's financial crisis," commented Allan Youster, president of the McGill Non-Academic Certified Association (MUNACA), in a press release about the demonstration.

Handing out fliers listing the salaries of McGill's top administrators, the demonstrators declared their frustration with what they see as a major contradiction.

"Principal Shapiro has called for sacrifices from the McGill community to help the financial situation... but now $2 million has been 'found' for faculty increases. The mood has turned in some areas from disbelief to growing anger," continued Youster.

For Béland, the University is isolating its workforce. "The unionised workforce has tried to accommodate budgetary cutbacks," he said, "but you can't solve billion dollar problems by making cuts to low wage workers."

CHOICES

But McGill administrators don't seem to see things the same way. According to Robert Savoie, director of McGill's Human Resources, with a budget reduction of $14 million last year and a cut of the same magnitude projected for the upcoming year, the University has to make choices.

"When you look at budget cuts of that size, it's never easy to deal with.... But the University has to maintain its competitiveness," said Savoie.

According to a representative of the University administration to the collective bargaining units, the workers at McGill "don't have a leg to stand on, they just want less work and more money."

He also dismissed demonstrators' concerns over salary gaps between top administrators and non-academic staff.

"Remember, most of these people can't speak English or

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Notes From Below

THE EDITORIAL POSITIONS OF INFORMATION EDITOR AND NATIONAL AFFAIRS/CUP LIAISON EDITOR ARE OFFICIALLY OPEN. THE NOMINATION PERIOD FOR THESE POSITIONS WILL CLOSE THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10 AT 17H. ALL MCGILL DAILY STAFF ARE ELIGIBLE TO RUN. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN EITHER OF THESE POSITIONS, OR WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE NOMINATION PROCESS, COME AND TALK TO AN EDITOR IN THE DAILY OFFICE (B-03 IN THE SHATNER BUILDING)

also

FUNKY LAYOUT PEOPLE
JUST A REMINDER THAT THERE IS A LAYOUT MEETING MONDAY OCTOBER 7 AT 17H IN THE ALLEY. THE MEETING WON'T TAKE LONG - SEE YOU THERE.

Erratum

The graphics credit for the article entitled "Work in progress" in the October 3 issue was incorrectly attributed to Victoria Stratton instead of Vitoria Stanton. The *Daily* regrets the error.

Letters

Concerned students state the facts

To the Daily,

As concerned students we take this opportunity to clarify some of the events surrounding the cancellation of the Red Cross Blood Drive last week.

The Students' Society of McGill University is mandated in its constitution to "protect and promote [the] welfare and interests of its members" (section 2.1). Likewise, "all society endeavors shall be undertaken with full respect for human dignity and without discrimination on the basis of.gender, age, race, ethnic or national origin, religion, sexual orientation..."(sex 2.3).

Last week in council, your student representatives unanimously passed a motion mandating the President of the Students' Society to petition the Canadian Red Cross to "amend their questionnaire to address specific sexual behavior regardless of sexual orientation". We all supported the Blood Drive and continue to do so; nobody wanted to have it canceled. The Red Cross made an autonomous decision to pull out of the Blood Drive, an unfortunate and unexpected result of the petitioning process.

Chris Carter, President of SSMU and an openly gay man, announced in a press release that he would attempt to donate blood during the Blood Drive at McGill. His intention was that he be turned away by the Red Cross, bringing to public attention their discriminatory and unsafe system of donor screening. There was never the intent to lie on the questionnaire, threaten the Red Cross, nor have them removed from campus.

We, like most McGill students, agree that the cancellation of the Blood Drive is a tragedy. Students have a right to be angry. But in order to make an informed decision, students should first have all the facts. We invite you to attend our next council meeting, Thursday, October 10th, 6pm in Shatner 107/08.

Steven Erdelyi, Clubs Representative
Mark Feldman, Vice President Internal
Adam Giambrone, Clubs Representative
Meg Grecchi, Residence Representative
Rich Lafferty, Music Representative
Matthew Lederman, Arts Representative
Don McGowan, Vice President University Affairs
Valerie Panet-Raymond, Science Representative
Shuah Roskies, Senate/BoG Representative
Darrell Tan, Science Representative
Mera Thompson, Arts Representative

Carter not the real culprit

To the Daily,

Hooray to McGill students. We now have evidence that unequivocally shows that students CAN mobilize within hours for an important cause! The cause? Chris Carter decides to stir up some media attention regarding the discriminatory nature of the Red Cross questionnaire. The Red Cross cancels their blood drive. The result? Students are mad. Understandably, of course. However, the students, in their immediate anger, lost sight of the real "enemy." Instead of marching down to Red Cross headquarters in a united effort to demonstrate their anger at their having canceled a vital event on campus - one that would save lives -because of their fear of "bad" publicity, the students decided to hang their president for having made an effort at bringing attention to the fact that the Red Cross' questionnaire discriminates against gay men. So students mobilized with the goal of slandering Chris Carter (reminder: this is the person THEY elected to ensure that students' civil and human rights are not infringed upon!). They hung posters, gave out leaflets and even held a small demonstration! Chris Carter's actions, not the Red Cross' unprofessional ways, therefore caught the eye of the McGill and Montreal community. Had the students waited a few minutes for their initial anger at Chris to abate, they would have realized that Chris is not to blame for the cancellation of the blood drive. Then they would have taken advantage of this unforeseen opportunity to increase awareness of the discriminatory nature of the Red Cross questionnaire and of their unfounded fear of media attention by demonstrating against the culprit - the Red Cross!

Anna K. Kruzynski
Vice President, University Affairs
Post-Graduate Students' Society

Operation Infant Soleil a sucess

To the Daily,

Thank you McGill students. In these "cost-cutting times" it is nice to see generous hearts. The Sigma Chi fraternity, after doing a hot-dog-a-thon for three years running, has been able to generate the highest revenue ever of $1200 for Operation Enfant Soleil - in other words McGill Students ate some free 1100 hot dogs in a 24-hour period. Operation Enfant Soleil collects money to donate to three Quebec children's hospitals. We take our suggestions from the McGill community, next year we plan to have veggie-dogs (and possibly Kosher foods). We couldn't have done it without you. We did it with lots of laughs. Thank you all.

Milton Wani

Call for more Conservatism

To the Daily,

Now that the Daily feels that the Federal Tories are "too leftist for radical youth-wing" then I suppose we can expect to see more Tory coverage in future issues of the Daily alongside glowing tributes to Alexa and Svend.

I hate to burst your leftist illusions but the Tory youth feel very much at home within the PC Party of Canada. Many youth policies were successfully adopted in Winnipeg. Prominent amendments included an income tax cut of 10-20%, a balanced budget within our first term of office, and a stricter young offenders act.

The PC Youth has thousands of members nationwide. Five defections to a dying Reform party, which understandably does not have a youth wing to speak of, is of no concern. The PC Party continues to stand for conservative policies without the extremism typifying Reform positions. As the Tories stand now second only to the Liberals popular support, it is clear that we are truly the only national alternative to the Chrétien government.

Helena Myers
Arts U3

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growing HIV positive population.

Thursday's demonstration has sparked a counter-campaign by students who do not support the movement to try to force Carter's resignation. According to Rogers, they plan to circulate their own petition this week, and provide people with accurate information so that they can make up their own minds.

"Chris Carter has been blamed for the cancellation of the blood drive and the real blame should be on the Red Cross because it pulled out without any consideration of the issues at hand, it refused to discuss any of the problems with the questionnaire," said Rogers.

As for the issue of whether Carter was acting to serve his own personal agenda, many of his supporters say that kind of charge smacks of homophobia.

If Carter had been fighting discrimination based on language or race, Rogers says, he wouldn't be accused of pursuing his own personal agenda. "I've felt so much hostility in the last three days," she said.

In fact, demonstrators at Thursday's rally were more than a little riled up.

When Darrell Tan, political coordinator for LBGTM started to speak into the microphone in defense of Carter's actions, one students yelled "I smell bullshit, what do you think?"

And at times, with demonstrators shouting down people trying to defend Carter, the atmosphere was that of a bar brawl more than anything else.

Mark Feldman, vp internal for SSMU, took note of Thursday's tensions over the cancellation of the blood drive, which falls within his portfolio.

However, he says he expects things to cool down in about a week, and hopes that when they do he can open up a productive dialogue about what to do next.

When asked whether this dialogue would include students who had opposed the Red Cross questionnaire, Feldman pointed out that LBGTM was invited to set up a table outside the blood drive, and that as vp internal, his goal is not "to look for political solutions but to save lives," in a way consistent with the views expressed by Council.

Feldman plans to work with the faculties of Science, Engineering and Medicine to help them organise their blood drives for next semester.

If the Red Cross doesn't want to come back to McGill, Feldman proposes busing people out to a Red Cross clinic or hospital.

SENDING A MESSAGE

McGill to join the Pan-Canadian Week of Action

by Sophie Skarbek - Borowska

As students begin the post-Thanksgiving grind, and the Canadian federal government starts budget planning, the Pan-Canadian Week of Action gets underway at many university campuses, including McGill.

Launched by the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS), the campaign will run from 21 - 25 October. Last weekend's CFS strategy meeting defined the goals of the week as halting federal cutbacks on post-secondary education and suggesting alternatives to current financial aid programs.

Says Brad Lavigne, National Chairperson of the CFS, "Federation members are using this campaign to call for a freeze on tuition fees... and a student loans programme which suits the needs of students."

"Our goal isn't just to have thousands of students demonstrating. It's to have thousands of students getting involved, getting educated. We'll be using every avenue possible to reach policy-makers and government officials," he adds.

These "avenues" include lobby sessions with MPs, soliciting student opinions on proposed cuts, and the launch of a year-long inquiry into student debt as a barrier to university education.

McGill's Post-graduate Student Society (PGSS) is organising a march in combination with an "action tournament" for October 24. The day's events are meant to protest cuts to social programmes, including welfare and low-cost housing subsidies, as well as to education.

"We're calling on all university associations to form teams for political action," says Erin Runions of the PGSS.

The action taken will be left up to the teams, but, says Runions, "We were thinking of having 100 students line up in the bank and each ask the teller to change a dollar into pennies."

The idea, she explains, is to highlight the fact that banks are making record profits, even while programme funding is being cut. Runions said the actions are aimed to "strategically disrupt government and business operations" in order to emphasise the issues the CFS is targetting, in the Québec political system.

Québec, according to Lavigne, has had the greatest tution fee hikes in the country, increasing 65% since 1990. That was the year that Québec lifted its historic 15 year tuition fee freeze.

However, Québec remains the province with the lowest tution fees in the country, especially in comparison to places like Ontario, which increased its tuition by 32% last year alone and is the province that contributes the least to post secondary education.

DAILY PHOTO BY SARAH JOHNSON

CFS Deja-vu

For Lavigne, Québec should be committed to maintaining its stance on low tution fees.

"Québec should not be raising its education fees. It has the highest participation rates in Canada. Look at the CEGEP system. University fees are half of those in Ontario. That's a good investment for the province."

But student activists may have a hard time convincing the Quebec government that their cause is worthy.

"[Quebec Premier] Lucien Bouchard is no social democrat," says Lavigne. "He does not give much attention to student interests."

This skepticism was reinforced by Parti Québecois Education Minister Pauline Marois last month. Marois refused to rule out the possibility of further tuition hikes in the province in the upcoming year.

Marois has also been openly lobbied to de-regulate tuition fees by McGill Principal Shapiro on a number of occasions.

Just what kind of impact will the Week of Action have on government policy?

Lavigne believes it will be significant. The Week of Action has been timed to coincide with the CFS's Federal Lobbying Strategy, a series of meetings with government and opposition members, and with the start of federal budget planning.

Student response has been high, especially from those who fear they cannot afford to start or complete a university education. The CFS also has several strong coalition partners, including the Action Canada Network and the Canadian Union for Public Employees.

"When you combine increasing fees and spiraling debt loads with the bleak job market which exists right now," says Lavigne, "it becomes clear that we need fundamental changes to our system of post-secondary education. There are more students graduating with higher debts than ever before. With the privatisation of the loans system, banks will soon be dictating who gets into university or not. No one can say that is a good system."

Over the last decade, tuition fees have increased on average 140% nationally. Student borrowers graduating in 1996 had an average debt load of $24,000.

"If we lose the freeze on fees, it's open season on students," Lavigne warns.

Anyone wanting to get involved or find more information on the Pan-Canadian Week of Action should call the Quebec office of the CFS at (514) 848 7900. McGill students can contact Erin Runions of the PGSS at 398-3756

Power in numbers or needless overlap?

SSMU Task forces get underway

by Jessica Greenberg

This year, it looks like the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU) might be taking some initiative by creating a new series of task forces.

The five task forces — Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay & Transgender Task Force; Religious Accommodation Task Force; Women's Task Force; People of Colour Task Force; and Accessibility Task Force — were introduced by SSMU President Chris Carter.

According to Carter, these task forces are important because they have the potential to improve the quality of life for all students.

"It's something that's really been lacking in SSMU," says Carter who points out that schools such as Western, York, and Guelph have already made equality issues implicit aspects of their respective student societies. He feels McGill should follow these examples and that groups such as, "LBGTM shouldn't be a watchdog for SSMU."

Each task force will be comprised of students-at-large, and will include SSMU councilors and representatives from relevant campus groups. The Office of the Dean of Students, and both academic and non-academic staff will also be represented.

"The idea is to form coalitions to bring like-minded groups together," says Carter.

Carter hopes that the task forces will conduct pro-active initiatives such as poster campaigns, campus surveys, and lobbying. Goals include the implementation of previously conducted audits, more diversified, representative curricula, and the creation of adequate racial and sexual harassment policies.

There is, however, a concern among existing organisations that these efforts may ultimately overlap with the efforts of other groups.

"It just seems like there's a little bit of redundancy [concerning the proposed agenda of the Women's Taskforce]," says Barbara Timmins, external coordinator of the Sexual Assault Centre of McGill Students' Society.

Political Coordinator of the Black Students' Network (BSN), Hirut Eyob, voices a similar concern.

Eyob asserts that campus awareness — one of the People of Colour Task Force's goals — is already incorporated into BSN's mandate.

However, she concedes that "there's always a need for representation on campus... There's always something to work on."

Timmins is eager to see the Women's Task Force deal with the issue of implementing a sexual assault policy.

BSN sees a need for improvements in the African Studies programme and representation of women of colour in the women's studies curriculum, and student involvement in Black History Month.

LBGTM Political Coordinator Darrell Tan is thrilled to see, "an effort by the Student Society themselves." He is optimistic that the LBGT Task Force will not be interfering with the existing group, but rather that more than one group working together will enjoy greater success in eliminating heterosexism from day-to-day life at McGill.

Despite a few reservations, Timmins has high hopes for the goals of the task forces:

"I think if it's run efficiently and there is no duplication with other groups on campus," she says, "[the task force] will be an asset."

A CALL AGAINST ARMS

CANADIANS URGED TO SPEAK OUT AGAINST NUCLEAR WEAPONS

by Mark Ratner

Nuclear disarmament activists around the country are applauding Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy's plea for input regarding international nuclear disarmament policy.

Axworthy's request — outlined in a recent letter addressed to the general public — reads, "Canada is strongly committed to nuclear disarmament. The issue of nuclear weapons is of vital concern to all people. Minister Axworthy believes that this issue should be the subject of a full and open public debate."

The announcement was prompted by a recent decision by the United Nations International Court of Justice (ICJ) on the status of nuclear weapons in the world.

The ICJ stated that international law provides neither an authorisation for, nor a prohibition against the threat or the use of nuclear weapons. Although the Court found that the manufacturing and use of nuclear weapons were generally contrary to international law, the ICJ could not find grounds to certify the illegality of nuclear weapons in all cases including "extreme cases of self defense."

The ICJ's decision places the impetus on the international community to work towards arms reductions. The court said that it is up to the international community to establish precedents that will provide the grounds for future court decisions on the issue of proliferation of nuclear arms.

"After the ICJ's opinion came down, [Axworthy] wanted to stimulate a debate on the issue," explained Colin Stewart, a spokesperson for Axworthy. He added, "in general, the Minister feels very strongly about public consultation."

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is asking Canadians to write letters or use the Ministry's internet web page to give their feedback.

Axworthy then plans to take this input and present it to the federal Liberal caucus, in an effort to create a strong position on nuclear disarmament.

In his letter to the general public Axworthy implied that while it is important for Canada to support the United Nation's international law on nuclear weapons, Canada should create its own strong stance on the issue.

Just last spring, Canada was involved in negotiations on the International Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty but was not able to conclude the negotiations by the set date. The letter to the public stated that Canada was hoping to "seek an effective and verifiable treaty that would ban nuclear test explosions for all time in all environments and for all time."

With the inconclusive results of the treaty still hanging, Axworthy has turned to public support in Canada for the issue of disarmament.

But while activists throughout the country praised Axworthy's actions, they also point out that Canada maintains a contradictory stand on the issue of disarmament

Judith Berlyn of the Peace network of Greater Montreal stated, "Canada should be taking a leadership role in reducing nuclear weapons."

Up until now, Canada has not done so. Although Canada has been a general proponent of arms reduction, it is also a member of NATO, an organisation Berlyn described as having "an international policy that includes the use of nuclear weapons as a first strike."

Canada allows testing of nuclear submarines in Canadian waters, off the coast of British Columbia just across from one of the largest American military bases, in the Straits of Juan de Fuca. Uranium mining and exports have also continued to be a large industry in Canada, providing the raw material for nuclear weapons to the United States and other countries.

Considering this apparent conflict of interest, the question is what exactly does the Canadian government's commitment to nuclear disarmament really mean?

But for Berlyn, Axworthy's recent call for input does represent an opportunity for Canadians to become involved in influencing Canada's policies.

She stated Canadians can make an impact because " Axworthy will take the comments of Canadians back to his Cabinet colleagues."

Although the past decade has seen a reduction in the numbers of nuclear arms in the world, a global threat still exists. "There are still about 9,000 nuclear weapons in the United States, and about 10,000 in Russia," noted Grant Birks, a representative of Project Ploughshares, a Canadian disarmament group.

But in the wake of the Cold War, support for disarmament is stronger than ever. "Since World War II, there has not been a greater opportunity to get rid of [Nuclear weapons]," stated Gordon Edwards, President of the Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility.

He added that "bomb factories should be closed down and nuclear waste should be cleaned up."

Edwards also praised Axworthy's call to Canadians, noting that a large response can affect global policy. "The real leadership always comes from the grassroots," he explained.

People interested in giving input to the Foreign Affairs department can write to:

Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade
125 Sussex Drive
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0G2
E-mail: skrsb3@fox.nstn.ca

Brief

December 6 Exams to Proceed

On Wednesday September 25, professor Michael DuBow put forth a motion in Senate to reschedule all final exams occurring on December 6. Senate defeated the motion for procedural reasons.

Don McGowan, vice president of university affairs for the Student Society of McGill University (SSMU), created the petition in memory of the 14 women senselessly murdered by Marc Lepine at Montreal's École Polytechnique in 1989.

McGowan says he is "upset" by the outcome. "It [the motion] was defeated on procedural grounds. We didn't even get to discuss the issue."

Due to its relative lateness, the motion needed a two thirds majority in Senate to pass, which it did not receive.

McGowan described student support for the motion as lukewarm. Nonetheless, DuBow said he "wanted to bring it to Senate to reconsider it anyway," and "at least get it to the floor."

McGowan is also pleased to have this issue noted in Senate documents for future timetablers to consider, even though this date falls in the exam schedule infrequently.

"This will tell us to be vigilant next time," DuBow declared. "We'll keep that day [December 6] in perspective."

— Martha MacDonald

Brief

Torontonians plan a fight

Community to rally for education

TORONTO (CUP) —The education sector is ready to take a message straight to the Ministry of Education during a Toronto-wide general strike.

University and high school students, teachers, professors, support and janitorial staff, teaching assistants and parents, are organising a rally at the Ministry of Education and Training to coincide with the general strike on Oct. 25.

The strike, and a massive demonstration planned for the following day, are the central elements of five days of action organised by labour unions and community and education groups for late October, to protest the policies of Mike Harris's conservative government.

Vicky Smallman, of the Canadian Federation of Students, says the education coalition is a central part of the days of action. Last year's $800 million cuts to Ontario's education sector were matched last week by minister of education John Snobelen announcement of another $600 million to $900 million in cuts from school board budgets.

"What we're fighting is an all-out assault on public education. It's important that from junior kindergarten to post-secondary education, we fight together. Education is a lifelong process and you cannot parcel it out, especially with the breadth and depth of the cuts," said Smallman.

Sid Ryan, president of the Ontario division of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, says "another $600 million means another 10,000 jobs will disappear.

The total number of layoff notices administered to teachers and school staff already exceeds 10,000 and the government is currently reviewing Bill 100, the law which protects teachers' right to strike.

The demonstration will also target the growing presence of the private sector in the post-secondary education system.

Organisers of the Oct. 25 rally will present Mike Harris with a dishonourable degree and charge the premier and Snobelen with contravening the Education Act.

—Sarah Schmidt

WHICH DEMOCRACY

SSMU PUTS ITSELF BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE

by Zachary Schwartz

With accusations of irresponsibility from both sides, the results of a campus-wide referendum from last year are being called into question.

In the referendum, McGill undergraduates students voted 1884 to 588 in favour of the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU) creating the Financial Ethics Research Committee, an advisory body to examine the ethics of SSMU financial contracts.

But Chris Muldoon, one of this year's SSMU elections coordinators, has accused SSMU of failing to uphold its responsibility to bilingualism.

Muldoon, along with his co-election coordinator and the chief returning officer (CRO), alerted the SSMU council that he would not accept the results of last year's referendum because he was unsure of whether a French version of the amendment ever existed.

"After having searched the SSMU offices, the CRO filing cabinet and all available remains of the past referendum... no official French version of the amendment currently exists," wrote this year's CRO and elections coordinators. "We find this sufficiently repugnant to Article 29 of the constitution to merit annulment [of last year's referendum]."

Article 29 outlines that the SSMU constitution and by-laws must be written in both official languages, and Muldoon is not alone in believing that SSMU has failed in its responsibility to bilingualism.

Don McGowan, vp university affairs of SSMU, has called SSMU's lack of bilingual operations "a big mess."

OTHER FORCES AT PLAY?

While everyone seems to agree on the importance of having referenda questions presented in both official languages, the proposed annulment of last year's referendum has called SSMU's democracy into question.

Campus groups QPIRG and Probe, supporters of the Financial Ethics Research Committee, see Muldoon's action as a step backwards.

Joya Balfour, one of the CROs for last year's referendum, maintains that a French version of the amendment was indeed available, and Arts representative Mera Thompson has taken the issue to the Judicial Board, arguing that SSMU's irresponsibility in losing the documents is no reason for the student body's decision to be overturned.

Simone Levine, a member of last year's committee in favour of creating the Financial Ethics Research Committee, agrees that a French version was available, and that last year's strong student mandate cannot be ignored. Levine is confident that Thompson has a strong case.

But this year's CRO and elections coordinators believe that the lack of proof is itself an insult to SSMU's democracy.

"Simply translating the amendment now from English to French would subvert the democratic intentions and the directly stated requirements of [the Constitution].... The simplest solution would be to declare the amendment null and void, and proceed as if it had never taken place," they state in their memo.

While Muldoon plans to serve democracy by bringing the issue of the Financial Ethics Research Committee to another campus-wide referendum this November, to students such as Levine and Thompson, it is the notion of overturning a clearly mandated student referendum that flies in the face of democracy.

Although Levine says that SSMU has a moral and legal responsibility to hold referenda in both official languages, she maintains that other motives lie behind the effort to annul last year's results.

"It's an important issue," she says, "but its not the issue at play."

Levine says last year's referendum on the Financial Ethics Committee was mired with misrepresentation by the committee against the amendment and she is suspicious of the current motivation behind the annulment

For Probe member Mike Toye, "There is a fundamental flaw in this referendum procedure when tactics seem to include actually getting the process canceled in order to 'win'."

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

French, most of them are not even literate," he said.

In response to complaints by demonstrators that with massive staff reductions, the work just can't be done, Savoie ensures "the intent of the University is to maintain cleanliness and a good environment."

But many McGill employees remain unconvinced. The demonstration was the first time that all of the University's labour unions came together in a common front.

"It is clear that organised labour is reaching a new level of organisation at McGill," said Regina Harrison, doctoral student in Anthropology one of the T.A. union's coordinators.

"McGill should be scared," declared Michael Temelini, another T.A. union coordinator.

"This demonstration took us five days to organise, and with 2,000 angry workers on campus, McGill should watch out. McGill should ignore us at their own peril," Temelini predicted.

Indeed, it may be a long winter at McGill. As Paul Béland observed "The University does not want to discuss the issues openly, but we are saying that the 'New McGill' is not going to be imposed, it's going to be consulted."

EVENTS

Monday, October 7

• **First International Women's Week** planning meeting in Women's Union (Shatner 423) at 17h30. Info: Women's Union, 398-6823.

Tuesday, October 8

• **Alternatives in Education** project planning and discussion meeting in Burnside 705, 17h30. Info: Matt, 284-7373, or Suzanne, 842-0841.

• The **YMCA** (1355 René-Levesque W.) presents "Planning For The Road Ahead", a lecture for prospective entrepreneurs, 18:15 to 20:45h. at 1355 Rene-Levesque W.

• **Philosophy Students Association** party in Leacock 927, 17h-19h.

• **MSIDI** potluck in Shatner cafeteria, 17:30h.

• **Earthsave McGill** first members meeting at 550 Sherbrooke, room 1175, 19h.

Wednesday, October 9

• **Department of Hispanic Studies** presents poetry and prose by Hernàn Barrios and Gloria Escomel, Bronfman 678, 16h.

• **Open Mic** at Thompson House, 18h. Sign up in Arts 305. All welcome to perform

MORE EVENTS

or listen.

• McGill Choral Society meeting in Strathcona C-304, 19h30. Tenors and basses needed

• CDAS/CASID Seminar Series on International Development presents Professor Ward Friesen on "Population — Environmental Crisis: the Pacific Islands in Global Context" at 3715 Peel Street (room 100), 12h30-13h30.

• The McGill Young Alumni invites all graduating students to Gert's, 17h30 for Octoberfest '96.

Thursday, October 10

• Network for Youth in Community Economics presents Bruce Campbell (Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives) and BUMMIS in Wendy Patrick Room (Wilson Hall School of Social Work), 18h. New members welcome.

• Concordia Science College public lecture presents Dr. Julius Adler "Life is One: The majore features of life hold true for all organisms" at 1455 de Maisonneuve W., Room H-110, 20h30. Admission: free. Info: 848-2595.

• McDonald-Currie Lecture presents Professor Jacques Monfrin in Peterson Hall (3460 McTavish) rm 116, 18h.

• Storycircle at the Yellow Door (3625 Aylmer), 20h. Admission: $3. Info: 849-2657.

• The Women's Union pot-luck for all interested in volunteering in Shatner 403, 18h. Info: 398-6823 or Gabriella, 276-2576.

Ongoing

• LOAF Organic Food Co-op orders produce and bulk dried goods on Mondays in the QPIRG office (3647 University) 14h30-18h30. Info: Rebecca French or Melanie Fearon, 398-7432.

• The Sexual Assault Centre of McGill's Students' Society offers support free groups and a confidential listening Help Line, 398-8500, open 19h-20h, 7 days/week. Also, the Centre needs male facilitators for male survivors. Info: 398-2700.

• The School of Social Work offers free bereavement groups. Info: Estell Hopmeyer, 398-7067.

• The Canadian Studies Graduate Students' Association announces a call for papers for the Third Annual Canadian Studies Conference. Deadline for abstracts: December 2. Info: 398-2974.

daily classifieds

Ads may be placed through the Daily Business Office, Room B-07, University Centre, 9h00-14h00. Deadline is 14h00, two working days prior to publication. McGill Students & Staff (with valid ID): $4.60 per day, 3 or more consecutive days, $4.05 per day. General Public: $5.75 per day, or $4.90 per day for 3 or more consecutive days. Extra charges may apply, prices include applicable GST (7%) or PST (6.5%). Full payment should accompany your advertising order and may be made in cash or by personal cheque (for amounts over $20 only). For more information, please visit our office or call 398-6790. WE CANNOT TAKE CLASSIFIED ADS OVER THE PHONE. PLEASE CHECK YOUR AD CAREFULLY WHEN IT APPEARS IN THE PAPER. The Daily assumes no financial responsibility for errors, or damages due to errors. Ad will re-appear free of charge upon request if information is incorrect due to our error. The Daily reserves the right not to print any classified ad.

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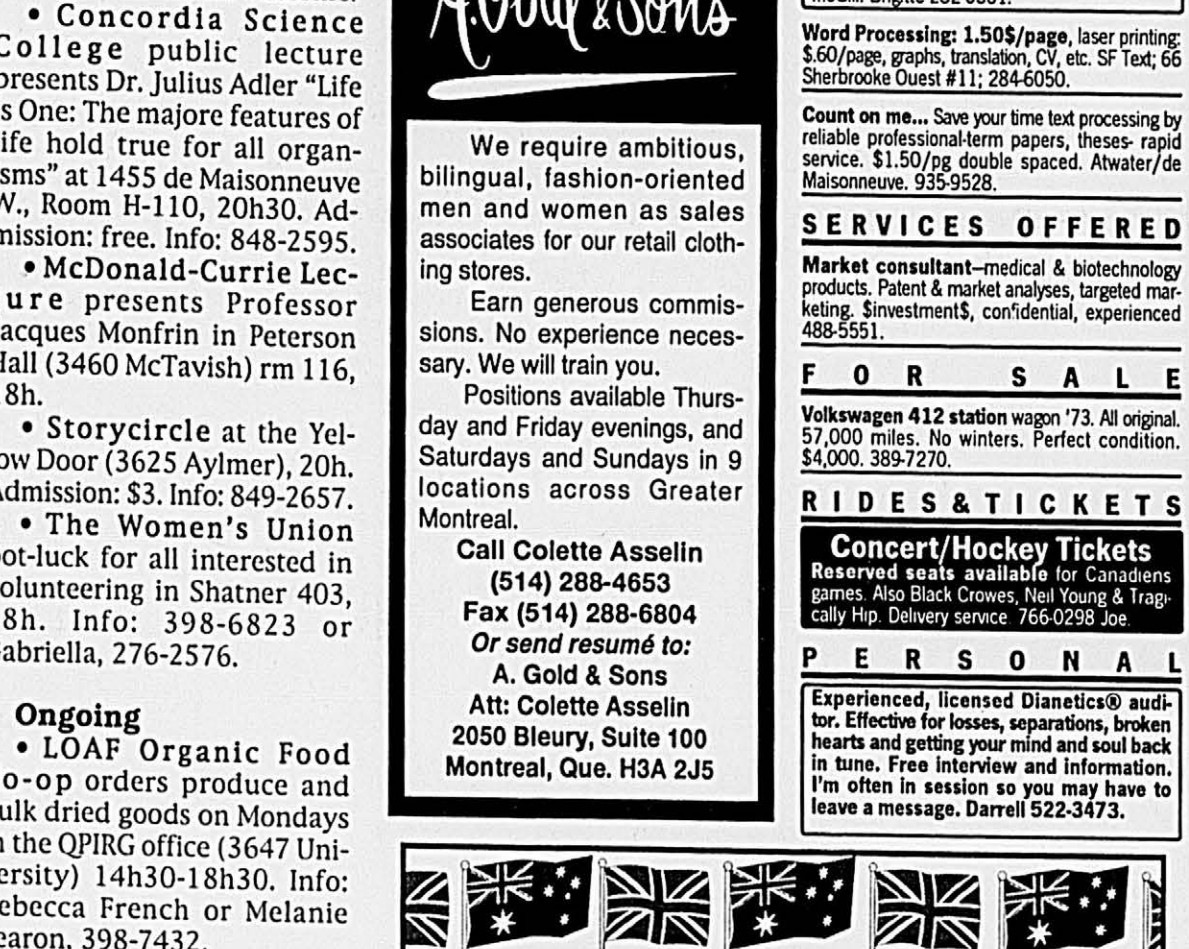

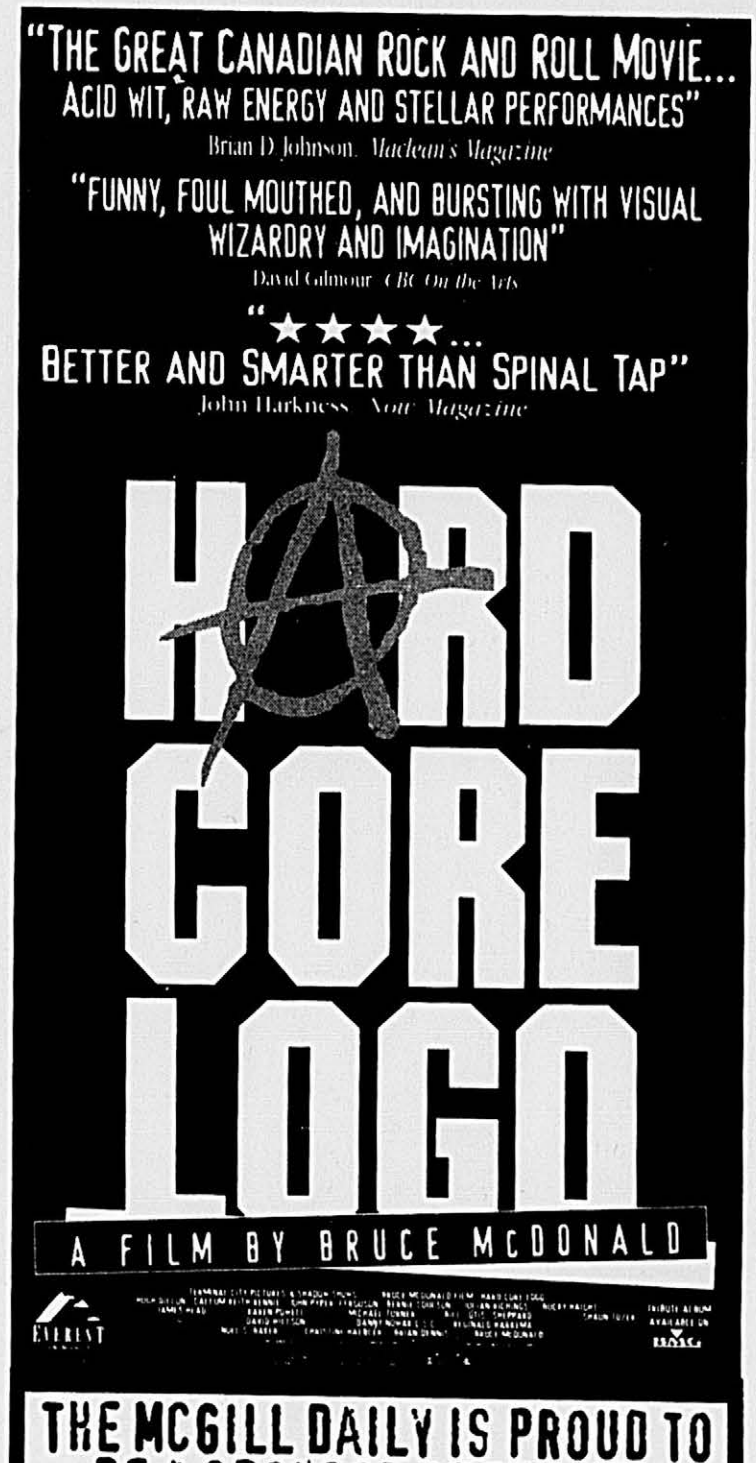

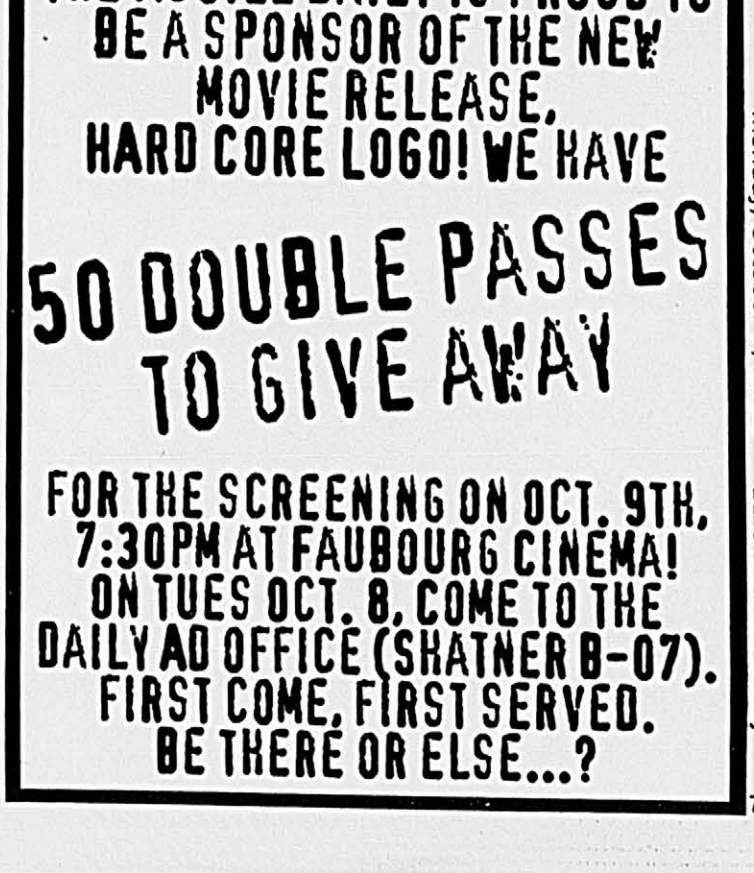

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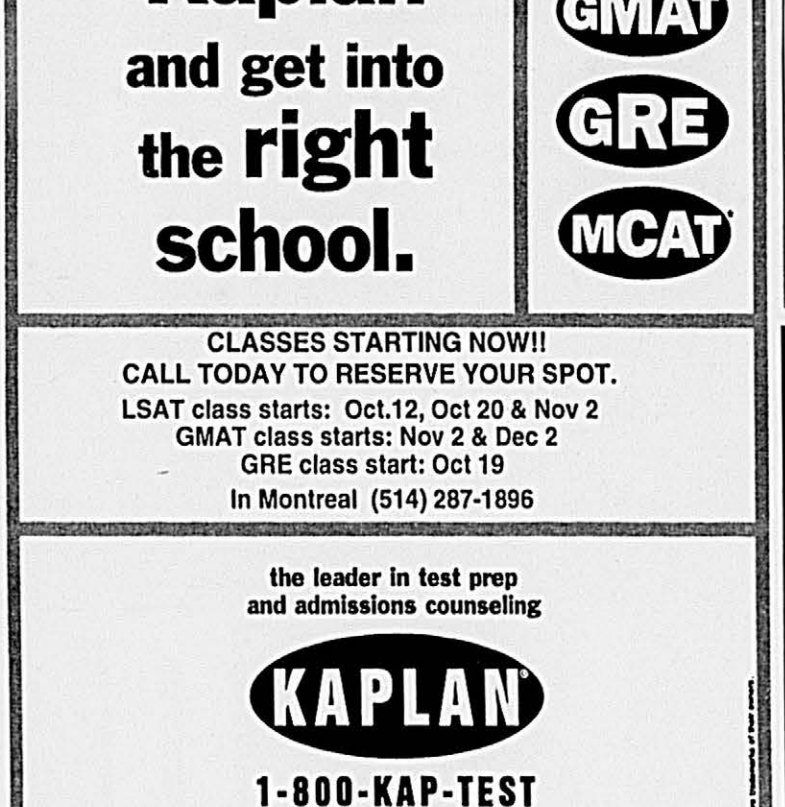

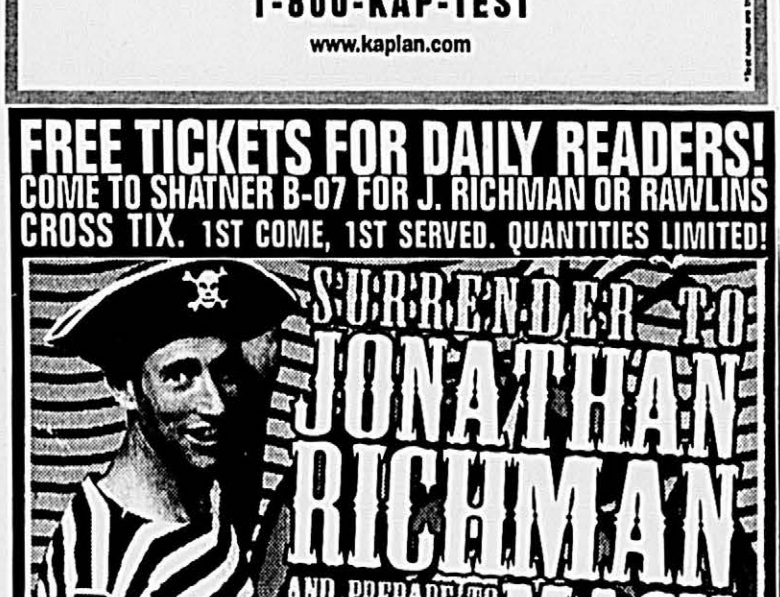

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